(b) if so, whether the experience certificate of the tenderer is suficient in this regard;

(c) if so, whether Government are aware of the fact that in the Meerut region of the Sanchar Nigam added their own conditions in the tender to benefit a particular tenderer; and

(d) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The experience of the bidder is one of the criteria along with other parameters to establish the eligibility of the bidders.

(c) No such conditions have been added by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) exclusively for Meerut region.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Loss to MTNL

2582. SHRI B.J. PANDA:

MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MTNL has suffered 48 per cent dip in its net profit for the year ended on the 31st March, 2003;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to control the loss;

(c) whether it is also a fact that despite this decline in net profit, the Company has recommended tax free 45 per cent divided; and

(d) whether the Company has a dip in their.subscribers base; if so, the action plan to arrest this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) :(a) The net profit of MTNL during the year 2002-2003 after tax is Rs. 877.1 crores which is 32% less than net profit in previous year (Rs. 1300.6 crores).

(b) The reasons for decrease in profit is mainly due to continuous decline in tariff which have led to reduction in revenue over the last year. MTNL is not only continuously improving its network but also introducing new and value added services, better customer care and state-of-art technology equipment.

(c) MTNL has declared 45% dividend which is tax free.

(d) The subscriber base has not dipped, however through better service, customer care and new services under stiff competition, MTNL has remained as market leader in basic services.

Mobile Telephone to Postmen

2583. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a scheme to provide WLL facilities to 8000 villages devoid of telecom facilities through 1800 rural postmen carrying WLL mobile phones;

(b) whether these postmen are to be paid commission from the earnings of the rural mobile phone facility, if so, the details of the scheme, indicating the cost involved therein; and

(c) the steps, so far, taken to implement the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) A Pilot scheme has been implemented on 24-12-2002 through Grameen Dak Sewak Delivery Agents (GDSDAs) of the Department of Post (D o P) to be called as "Grameen Sanchar Sewak (GSS)" who were willing to work as franchisee for BSNL attached to the rural Post offices. The telephone facility has been provided to the villages through the GSSs who carry a integrated Fixed Wireless Terminal (FWT) with display unit facility in a carry bag and visits door-to-door to provide telephone facility to the rural populace in this routine beat in the villages. The FWT costing around Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees ten thousand only) has been supplied by the BSNL. In this pilot scheme 1800 GSSs have been selected to extend telephone facility in about 8000 villages of the country. The scheme has been implemented in all the telecom cricules, except A&N, Haryana and Punjab.

The scheme is applicable on the existing STD/ISD/PCO franchisee basis. The GSS is entitled to 20% commission on all outgoing calls